

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2015

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HOUSE PRINCIPAL CLERK

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HOUSE DRH40191-MG-39A\* (02/11)

Short Title: Enhance Patient Safety in Operating Rooms.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representative Adcock.

Referred to:

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO ENHANCE PATIENT SAFETY IN HOSPITAL AND AMBULATORY  
3 SURGICAL FACILITY OPERATING ROOMS BY REQUIRING AT LEAST ONE  
4 CIRCULATING NURSE TO BE PRESENT IN EACH OPERATING ROOM DURING  
5 EACH SURGICAL PROCEDURE.

6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 **SECTION 1.** Article 5 of Chapter 131E of the General Statutes is amended by  
8 adding a new Part to read:

9 "Part 3A. Patient Safety.

10 **"§ 131E-89. Circulating nurses required in operating rooms.**

11 (a) The following definitions apply in this section:

12 (1) Circulating nurse. – A registered nurse licensed to practice under Article 9A  
13 of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes who is educated and trained in  
14 perioperative nursing.

15 (2) Perioperative nursing. – A specialized area of nursing practice that involves  
16 the planning, coordination, delivery, and evaluation of nursing care to  
17 patients whose protective reflexes or self-care abilities are potentially  
18 compromised during surgical or other invasive procedures.

19 (b) In order to enhance patient safety and protection, the Commission shall adopt rules  
20 to require each hospital licensed under this Article to have a minimum of one circulating nurse  
21 physically present in each operating room for the duration of each surgical procedure to (i)  
22 coordinate the nursing care and safety needs of patients in the operating room and (ii) support  
23 the surgical team as appropriate during surgery.

24 (c) The Department shall not issue or renew a license under this Article unless the  
25 applicant is in compliance with this section."

26 **SECTION 2.** Part 4 of Article 6 of Chapter 131E of the General Statutes is  
27 amended by adding a new section to read:

28 **"§ 131E-153. Circulating nurses required in operating rooms.**

29 (a) The following definitions apply in this section:

30 (1) Circulating nurse. – A registered nurse licensed to practice under Article 9A  
31 of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes who is educated and trained in  
32 perioperative nursing.

33 (2) Perioperative nursing. – A specialized area of nursing practice that involves  
34 the planning, coordination, delivery, and evaluation of nursing care to  
35 patients whose protective reflexes or self-care abilities are potentially  
36 compromised during surgical or other invasive procedures.



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1        (b)    In order to enhance patient safety and protection, the Commission shall adopt rules  
2 to require each ambulatory surgical facility licensed under this Part to have a minimum of one  
3 circulating nurse physically present in each operating room for the duration of each surgical  
4 procedure to (i) coordinate the nursing care and safety needs of patients in the operating room  
5 and (ii) support the surgical team as appropriate during surgery.

6        (c)    The Department shall not issue or renew a license under this Part unless the  
7 applicant is in compliance with this section."

8                **SECTION 3.** This act becomes effective October 1, 2015.